

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method of quantifying an automation benefit of an automated call processing center as saved agent-time, a call from a caller to the automated call processing center including an interactive voice response (IVR) portion of the call, and, at the caller's option, an agent-caller dialog portion of the call, said method comprising the steps of:

(i) gathering event-sequence data for a plurality of calls received by the call processing center;

(ii) determining a task capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call;

(iii) calculating an amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-caller dialog portion of a call instead of in the IVR portion of a call;

(iv) examining the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IVR portion of a call, actually was performed in the IVR portions of the plurality of calls;

(v) determining an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of calls involving the task actually was performed in the IVR portions of those calls; and

(vi) calculating an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IVR portion of a call instead of in the agent-caller dialog portion of a call, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.

2. A method according to Claim 1,

wherein steps (iii) through (vi) are performed for a plurality of tasks determined to be capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call, and

further comprising the step of (vii) calculating a total automation benefit by summing respective automation benefits for the plurality of tasks.

3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the plurality of tasks corresponds to one of a plurality of categories of operations of a call-flow model of the call processing center.

4. An apparatus for quantifying an automation benefit of an automated call processing center as saved agent-time, a call from a caller to the automated call processing center including an interactive voice response (IVR) portion of the call, and, at the caller's option, an agent-caller dialog portion of the call, said apparatus comprising:

means for gathering event-sequence data for a plurality of calls received by the call processing center;

means for calculating an amount of time a task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-caller dialog portion of a call instead of in the IVR portion of a call, wherein the task is capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call;

means for examining the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IVR portion of a call, actually was performed in the IVR portions of the plurality of calls;

means for determining an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of calls involving the

task actually was performed in the IVR portions of those calls; and

means for calculating an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IVR portion of a call instead of in the agent-caller dialog portion of a call, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.

5. An apparatus according to Claim 4,

wherein said means for determining determines an automation benefit for a plurality of tasks that are determined to be capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call, and

wherein said means for calculating an automation benefit calculates a total automation benefit by summing respective automation benefits for the plurality of tasks.

6. An apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein the plurality of tasks corresponds to one of a plurality of categories of operations of a call-flow model of the call processing center.

7. A system for quantifying an automation benefit of an automated call processing center as saved agent-time, a call from a caller to the automated call processing center including an interactive voice response (IVR) portion of the call, and, at the caller's option, an agent-caller dialog portion of the call, said system being operable to:

gather event-sequence data for a plurality of calls received by the call processing center;

calculate an amount of time a task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-caller dialog portion of a

call instead of in the IVR portion of a call, wherein the task is capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call;

examine the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IVR portion of a call, actually was performed in the IVR portions of the plurality of calls;

determine an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of calls involving the task actually was performed in the IVR portions of those calls; and

calculate an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IVR portion of a call instead of in the agent-caller dialog portion of a call, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.

8. A system according to Claim 7,

wherein an automation benefit is determined for a plurality of tasks that are determined to be capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call, and

wherein said system is further operable to calculate a total automation benefit by summing respective automation benefits for the plurality of tasks.

9. A system according to Claim 8, wherein the plurality of tasks corresponds to one of a plurality of categories of operations of a call-flow model of the call processing center.

10. A computer program product embodying a computer program for implementing a method of quantifying an automation benefit of an automated call processing center as saved agent-time, a call from a caller to the automated call processing center including an interactive voice response (IVR) portion of the call, and, at the caller's option, an agent-caller dialog portion of the call, said computer program product comprising:

code for gathering event-sequence data for a plurality of calls received by the call processing center;

code for calculating an amount of time a task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-caller dialog portion of a call instead of in the IVR portion of a call, wherein the task is capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call;

code for examining the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IVR portion of a call, actually was performed in the IVR portions of the plurality of calls;

code for determining an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of calls involving the task actually was performed in the IVR portions of those calls; and

code for calculating an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IVR portion of a call instead of in the agent-caller dialog portion of a call, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.

11. A computer program product according to Claim 10,

wherein said code for determining determines an automation benefit for a plurality of tasks that are determined to be capable of being performed by the call processing center during the IVR portion of a call, and

wherein said code for calculating calculates a total automation benefit by summing respective automation benefits for the plurality of tasks.

12. A computer program product according to Claim 11, wherein the plurality of tasks corresponds to one of a plurality of categories of operations of a call-flow model of the call processing center.

13. A method of quantifying an automation benefit of an automated contact processing center as saved agent-time, a contact from a contactor to the automated contact processing center including an interactive response (IR) portion of the contact, and, at the contactor's option, an agent-contactor dialog portion of the contact, said method comprising the steps of:

(i) gathering event-sequence data for a plurality of contacts received by the contact processing center;

(ii) determining a task capable of being performed by the contact processing center during the IR portion of a call;

(iii) calculating an amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact instead of in the IR portion of a contact;

(iv) examining the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IR portion of a contact, actually was performed in the IR portions of the plurality of contacts;

(v) determining an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of contacts involving the task actually was performed in the IR portions of those contacts; and

(vi) calculating an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IR portion of a contact instead of in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.

14. An apparatus for quantifying an automation benefit of an automated contact processing center as saved agent-time, a contact from a contactor to the automated contact processing center including an interactive response (IR) portion of the contact, and, at the contactor's option, an agent-contactor dialog portion of the contact, said apparatus comprising:

means for gathering event-sequence data for a plurality of contacts received by the contact processing center;

means for calculating an amount of time a task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact instead of in the IR portion of a contact, wherein the task is capable of being performed by the contact processing center during the IR portion of a call;

means for examining the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IR portion of a contact, actually was performed in the IR portions of the plurality of contacts;

means for determining an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of contacts involving the task actually was performed in the IR portions of those contacts; and

means for calculating an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IR portion of a contact instead of in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.

15. A system for quantifying an automation benefit of an automated contact processing center as saved agent-time, a contact from a contactor to the automated contact processing center including an interactive response (IR) portion of the contact, and, at the contactor's option, an agent-contactor dialog portion of the contact, said system being operable to:

gather event-sequence data for a plurality of contacts received by the contact processing center;

calculate an amount of time a task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact instead of in the IR portion of a contact, wherein the task is capable of being performed by the contact processing center during the IR portion of a contact;

examine the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IR portion of a contact, actually was performed in the IR portions of the plurality of contacts;

determine an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of contacts involving the task

actually was performed in the IR portions of those contacts;
and

calculate an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IR portion of a contact instead of in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.

16. A computer program product embodying a computer program for implementing a method of quantifying an automation benefit of an automated contact processing center as saved agent-time, a contact from a contactor to the automated contact processing center including an interactive response (IR) portion of the contact, and, at the contactor's option, an agent-contactor dialog portion of the contact, said computer program product comprising:

code for gathering event-sequence data for a plurality of contacts received by the contact processing center;

code for calculating an amount of time a task would take if performed by an agent in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact instead of in the IR portion of a contact, wherein the task is capable of being performed by the contact processing center during the IR portion of a contact;

code for examining the event-sequence data to determine whether the task, which is capable of being performed in the IR portion of a contact, actually was performed in the IR portions of the plurality of contact;

code for determining an automation rate for the task by calculating what percentage of contacts involving the

task actually was performed in the IR portions of those contacts; and

code for calculating an automation benefit by multiplying the automation rate by an amount of agent-time saved by performing the task in the IR portion of a contact instead of in the agent-contactor dialog portion of a contact, wherein the amount of agent-time saved corresponds to the amount of time the task would take if performed by an agent.